

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MC-02 ACDA-05 EB-07 OMB-01 PM-03 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-02 COME-00

TRSE-00 PRS-01 SAM-01 H-02 EURE-00 /066 W

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P 091354Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3610

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 3142

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BE

SUBJECT: F-104 REPLACEMENT; REPORTED FRENCH REACTION TO FN
PRO-F-16 ACTIVITY

REF: BRUSSELS 2799

1. REFTEL REPORTED (PARA 4) THAT FRENCH WERE MOVING
FROM PERSUASION TO THREAT IF BELGIUM DOES NOT CHOOSE
THE MIRAGE. ALSO THAT FABRIQUE NATIONALE (FN) HAD
BEGUN LOBBYING WITHIN BELGIAN GOVERNMENT ON BEHALF OF
F-16.

2. FN PREPARED A STUDY (COPY POUCHED STATE EUR/WE)
STRESSING ADVANTAGES OF F-16'S F-100 ENGINE. COPY OF
FN STUDY LEAKED TO FLEMISH FINANCIAL DAILY TIME WHICH
PUBLISHED EXTENSIVE SUMMARY APRIL 8.

3. ACCORDING TO FN EXECUTIVE, DASSAULT GENERAL MANAGER
FRANCOIS TELEPHONE HIM ON APRIL 8. FRANCOIS TOLD
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FN THAT FRENCH GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSING AN INTEREST

IN THE FN-PRODUCED LIGHT AUTOMATIC CARBINE (THE CAL) WOULD SWITCH THAT INTEREST TO A GERMAN CARBINE WITHIN 48 HOURS. FN HAS NOTIFIED BELGIAN MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OF FRANCOIS' CALL.

4. FN INFORMED US THAT FRENCH HAD BEEN DICKERING WITH FN FOR A TWO BILLION PLUS BF ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY FRANCE MIGHT PURCHASE ONE BILLION BF WORTH OF THE CAL AND ENTER INTO LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS WORTH OVER ONE BILLION BF MORE.

5. FN ALSO PRODUCES THE MAG 58 SUBMACHINE GUN, WHICH UNDERGOING US ARMY TESTING, AND FORTUITOUSLY WAS NOTIFIED LAST WEEK THAT INITIAL TEST RESULTS WERE EXCELLENT. FN UNDERSTANDS THAT TESTING WILL CONTINUE AND NOTIFIED BELGIAN MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OF INITIAL TEST RESULTS.

6. COMMENT. EMBASSY STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT F-104 ISSUE SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE TREATED ENTIRELY SEPARATELY FROM ANY OTHER USG INTERESTS IN BELGIAN INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION. WE BELIEVE THAT IF THIS REPORT IS PROVED CORRECT, AS WE BELIEVE IT TO BE, IT WILL NOT REDOUND TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE FRENCH WHEN IT BECOMES KNOWN, AS IT UNDOUBTEDLY WILL. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO US TO HAVE FOR BACKGROUND PURPOSES IN DEALING WITH FN INFO ON MAG 58 TESTING
ACTION REQUESTED: STATUS REPORT ON CURRENT TEST PROGRAM OF MAG 58 WITH INDICATION OF PROBABLE FUTURE STEPS IN TEST PROGRAM.
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